Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 49, wherein the reinforcing element is made of a material having a higher strength-to-weight ratio than the material comprising at least one of the base and the reflective element.

4. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 3, wherein the reinforcing element surrounds at least a portion of the connection.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 49, wherein the first reinforcing element comprises a plate having a first end positioned beneath the connection and the second reinforcing element.

9. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 8, wherein the first reinforcing element has a second end extending from the first end and in abutment with the mounting portion of the base.

10. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 9, wherein the first reinforcing element is L-shaped between the first end and the second end.

11. (Currently Amended) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 10, wherein the L-shape of the first reinforcing element transfers at least one of said forces, said stresses, and moments within the vehicle mirror system from beneath the connection at the first end to the mounting portion adjacent to the second end thereof.

12. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 11, wherein the reflective element assembly further comprises a recess which receives the second reinforcing element.

13. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 12, wherein the recess has a lower surface which forms a portion of the connection, and the second reinforcing element abuts the lower surface.

14. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 13, wherein the recess and the second reinforcing element each comprise a coaxially-aligned recess forming a portion of the connection.

15. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 14, wherein the second reinforcing element includes a vertically-extending flange.

16. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 15, wherein the vertically extending flange is in alignment with at least one axis of the reflective element assembly.

17. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 16, wherein the second reinforcing element further comprises an annular portion surrounding the connection.

18. (Currently Amended) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 17, wherein a portion of the annular portion is integrally formed with the vertically-extending flange, whereby the vertically-extending flange is capable of transferring at least one of said forces, said stresses, and said moments through the connection via the annular portion.

19. (Original) The exterior vehicle mirror system of claim 18, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing elements is made of metal.

20-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) An exterior vehicle mirror system comprising:

a base having a mounting portion for mounting the mirror system to a vehicle;

a reflective element assembly for providing an operator of the vehicle with a rearward view;

a connection pivotally mounting the reflective element assembly to the base; and

a first reinforcing element associated with the base and vertically spaced from a second reinforcing element associated with the reflective element assembly, the first reinforcing element comprising a surface, in abutment with the base to resist deflection of the base due to forces imposed on the reflective element assembly, the first and second reinforcing elements being integrally molded with the base and the reflective element assembly in cooperative relationship

with the connection to distribute at least one of stresses and forces imposed on the vehicle mirror system to the base along a stress path to enhance the strength of the connection.

50-54. (Cancelled)